

Facts About Prostate Cancer

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What You Should Know

- Prostate cancer has been the most frequently diagnosed cancer in Michigan since 1991.¹
- Prostate cancer was the second leading cause of cancer deaths in Michigan men in 2002.²
- Michigan ranks 21st highest in the nation in prostate cancer mortality.³
- It is not clear whether early detection of prostate cancer will improve a man's chance of survival. Many doctors believe it will help, but not all doctors agree. Before deciding to be tested, every man should know what choices he has if prostate cancer is found.⁴
- Because treatment of prostate cancer may have serious adverse side effects (including urinary incontinence and sexual impotence), every man should discuss with his physician: his personal risk status; the risks and the benefits of early detection of prostate cancer; and the relevance of screening.⁴
- Men who are most likely to benefit from prostate cancer screening include:
 - ✓ High-risk men between the ages of 40 and 75 who have a life expectancy of more than 10 years, and
 - ✓ All other men between the ages of 50 and 75 who have a life expectancy of more than 10 years.⁴

Risk Factors

- The chance of developing prostate cancer increases with age. Approximately 69 percent of Michigan men diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2001 were between the ages of 50 and 74; more than 27 percent were 75 years of age or older.¹
- Other factors that increase an individual's risk of developing prostate cancer include African-American ancestry and a close family history of prostate cancer.⁵

Incidence and Mortality

- During 2001, 8,662 Michigan men received a diagnosis of prostate cancer. During 2002, 1,015 men in our state died of the disease.^{1,2}
- Since the early 1990s, the incidence of prostate cancer in Michigan has declined. However, the Michigan incidence rate still exceeds the national rate.^{1,6}
- African-American men have the highest incidence of prostate cancer and also are more likely than Caucasian men to die of the disease. The incidence of prostate cancer is 1.4 times greater and the prostate cancer mortality rate is 1.9 times greater among African-American men than among Caucasian men.^{1,2}

Stage at Diagnosis

- In Michigan, 76.1 percent of the prostate cancer cases diagnosed during 2001 were found at a local stage.¹
- Ninety-eight percent of men who have received a diagnosis of prostate cancer live at least five years and 84 percent survive at least 10 years. Survival is greatest if the cancer is detected before it has spread beyond the prostate.⁵

Screening and Diagnosis

- There are three procedures used to detect prostate cancer:
 - ✓ a digital rectal examination (often called a DRE);
 - ✓ a PSA blood test, which measures the prostate-specific antigen protein made by prostate cells; and
 - ✓ a trans-urethral ultrasound (or TRUS) exam.
- The PSA test is the most reliable method of detecting pre-clinical prostate cancer, but it is not a perfect test. PSA levels can be high because of other conditions that are not cancer. Some men who have prostate cancer do not have elevated PSA levels. Furthermore, there is a difference of opinion among experts about the level of PSA that indicates a need for additional tests.⁴
- If prostate cancer screening is to be done, most experts recommend that the PSA test be accompanied by a rectal exam to improve the likelihood of an accurate diagnosis.⁴

References:

1. MDCH Cancer Registry, 1985-2001
2. MDCH Division for Vital Records & Health Statistics, 1985-2002
3. NCI State Cancer Profiles
4. *Michigan Prostate Cancer Consensus Conference Statements and Recommendations*, 1995
5. American Cancer Society
6. SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2001